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Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 160456
ORIGIN EA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NSCE-00 SP-02 SSO-00 CIAE-00
DODE-00 NSAE-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-10
L-03 PA-02 SS-15 TRSE-00 OMB-01 EB-08 /073 R

DRAFTED BY EA/K:FHMISCH:RC
APPROVED BY EA/K:RGRICH
NSC: MR. ARMACOST
EA: MR. SULLIVAN
S/P: MR. ROMBERG
EA: MR. HOLBROOKE
EA/P: MR. MAGRUDER
----------031476 231919Z /75
O R 231910Z JUN 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY SEOUL IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

UNCLAS STATE 160456

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, SOPN, KS, KN, US

SUBJECT: U.S. STATEMENT ON SOUTH KOREAN PRESIDENT'S
PROPOSAL TO OPEN TRADE LINKS WITH NORTH KOREA

1. DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN READ FOLLOWING STATEMENT AT NOON
BRIEFING, FRIDAY, JUNE 23. QUOTE.

SOUTH KOREAN INITIATIVE ON NORTH-SOUTH RELATIONS

WE WISH TO TAKE NOTE OF A PROPOSAL ANNOUNCED A FEW HOURS
AGO BY REPUBLIC OF KOREA PRESIDENT PARK CONCERNING
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RELATIONS BETWEEN SOUTH AND NORTH KOREA. PRESIDENT PARK
PROPOSED THE CREATION OF CONSULTATIVE MACHINERY TO PROMOTE
NORTH KOREA-SOUTH KOREA ECONOMIC RELATIONS. THE PRESI-
DENT ANNOUNCED HIS READINESS TO HOLD A MINISTERIAL-LEVEL
MEETING WITH THE NORTH IF DESIRED, BUT ALSO INDICATED THAT
THE SOUTH WOULD BE FLEXIBLE ON THE SPECIFIC DETAILS FOR
ESTABLISHING TRADE, TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION,

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AND WOULD BE WILLING TO HAVE INITIAL CONTACTS MADE
BETWEEN BUSINESSMEN.

BY INITIATING THIS FURTHER EFFORT TO REOPEN THE LONG-
STALLED DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE TWO KOREAS , WE BELIEVE THAT
PRESIDENT PARK HAS MADE A STATESMANLIKE GESTURE. WE HOPE

THAT NORTH KOREA WILL GIVE IT SERIOUS CONSIDERATION. THE
NORTH KOREANS HAVE PREVIOUSLY CALLED FOR NORTH-SOUTH
CONTACTS BETWEEN NON-GOVERNMENTAL REPRESENTATIVES,
ALTHOUGH THEY UNILATERALLY BROKE OFF THE NORTH-SOUTH
RED CROSS TALKS EARLIER THIS YEAR. WE ALSO NOTE THAT
JUST A FEW DAYS AGO NORTH KOREAN MEDIA CALLED FOR
ECONOMIC EXCHANGES. THEREFORE A BASIS WOULD APPEAR
TO EXIST FOR A POSITIVE RESPONSE BY THE NORTH TO THE
PROPOSED ECONOMIC CONSULTATIVE ARRANGEMENTS. THE UNITED
STATES GOVERNMENT CONTINES TO BELIEVE THAT DIRECT DIALOGUE
BETWEEN THE TWO KOREAN STATES OFFERS THE BEST MEANS FOR
REDUCING TENSIONS ON THE PENINSULA. ECONOMIC CONTACTS
COULD OFFER A BRIDGE TO FURTHER DIALOGUE IN THE FUTURE.
END QUOTE.

2. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS PREPARED FOR THE SAME BRIEFING
WERE:
QUOTE.
Q. IF NORTH AND SOUTH KOREA BEGAN TO TRADE WOULD THE
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UNITED STATES TRADE WITH NORTH KOREA?

A. IF NORTH KOREA BEGINS TO TRADE WITH THE REPUBLIC OF
KOREA WE WOULD NATURALLY TAKE THAT INTO CONSIDERATION IN
REASSESSING OUR OWN POLICIES. WE WOULD ALSO KEEP IN
MIND OUR POSITION THAT WE WOULD BE PREPARED TO TAKE
STEPS TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH NORTH KOREA IF NORTH
KOREA'S PRINCIPAL ALLIES WOULD ALSO BE WILLING TO
IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH SOUTH KOREA.

Q. WAS PRESIDENT PARK'S STATEMENT MADE IN COORDINATED
EFFORT WITH THE UNITED STATES?

A. THIS IS PRESIDENT PARK'S OWN PROPOSAL. IT IS NOT
A JOINT U.S.-KOREAN PROPOSAL NOR DID WE SUGGEST THE IDEA.
PRESIDENT PARK INFORMED US IN ADVANCE OF HIS DECISION TO
MAKE THIS OFFER, HOWEVER, AND WE BELIEVE IT MERITS
A SERIOUS REPONSE.

Q. HOW LONG HAS THIS DIALOGUE BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH
KOREA BEEN GOING ON, AND AT WHAT LEVEL?

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A. IN APRIL 1972, NORTH AND SOUTH KOREA OPENED A DIALOGUE WITH HIGH LEVEL RECIPROCAL VISITS TO SEOUL AND PYONGYANG, BUT THESE TALKS ESSENTIALLY CEASED IN EARLY 1974 EXCEPT FOR CONTACTS BETWEEN RED CROSS REPRESENTATIVES. THESE LATTER CONTACTS APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN BROKEN OFF BY THE NORTH IN APRIL OF THIS YEAR.

Q. WHAT IS THE STATUS OF THE PROPOSAL FOR TRIPARTITE TALKS AMONG THE UNITED STATES, NORTH KOREA AND SOUTH KOREA?

A. AS FAR AS WE ARE AWARE THE NORTH HAS NOT FORMALLY RESPONDED TO THIS PROPORAL. HOWEVER, THEY HAVE MADE IT CLEAR THROUGH THEIR PRESS COMMENTARY THAT THEY ARE UNCLASSIFIED

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NOT INTERESTED.

END QUOTE.

SPOKESMAN USED THIS GUIDANCE IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS FROM MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES.

3. SPOKESMAN DECLINED TO RESPOND TO QUESTION ON WHETHER US WOULD BE WILLING TO JOIN NORTH-SOUTH ECONOMIC TALKS AT LATER STAGE.

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PAGE 01 STATE 160456
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DRAFTED BY: EA/K:FHMISCH
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INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 7751

UNCLAS STATE 160456

FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 160456 SENT ACTION SEOUL INFO TOKYO, PEKING, MOSCOW 23 JUN 78

QUOTE UNCLAS STATE 160456

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, SOPN, KS, KN, US

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MEETING WITH THE NORTH IF DESIRED, BUT ALSO INDICATED THAT THE SOUTH WOULD BE FLEXIBLE ON THE SPECIFIC DETAILS FOR ESTABLISHING TRADE, TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION, AND WOULD BE WILLING TO HAVE INITIAL CONTACTS MADE BETWEEN BUSINESSMEN.

BY INITIATING THIS FURTHER EFFORT TO REOPEN THE LONG-STALLED DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE TWO KOREAS , WE BELIEVE THAT PRESIDENT PARK HAS MADE A STATESMANLIKE GESTURE. WE HOPE

THAT NORTH KOREA WILL GIVE IT SERIOUS CONSIDERATION. THE NORTH KOREANS HAVE PREVIOUSLY CALLED FOR NORTH-SOUTH CONTACTS BETWEEN NON-GOVERNMENTAL REPRESENTATIVES, ALTHOUGH THEY UNILATERALLY BROKE OFF THE NORTH-SOUTH RED CROSS TALKS EARLIER THIS YEAR. WE ALSO NOTE THAT JUST A FEW DAYS AGO NORTH KOREAN MEDIA CALLED FOR ECONOMIC EXCHANGES. THEREFORE A BASIS WOULD APPEAR TO EXIST FOR A POSITIVE RESPONSE BY THE NORTH TO THE PROPOSED ECONOMIC CONSULTATIVE ARRANGEMENTS. THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT CONTINES TO BELIEVE THAT DIRECT DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE TWO KOREAN STATES OFFERS THE BEST MEANS FOR

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3. SPOKESMAN DECLINED TO RESPOND TO QUESTION ON WHETHER US WOULD BE WILLING TO JOIN NORTH-SOUTH ECONOMIC TALKS AT LATER STAGE.

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Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 23 jun 1978
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Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Reason:
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Enclosure: n/a
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Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
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TAGS: ETRD, SOPN, KS, KN, US
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